

Message Text

SECRET

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IGA-02 AID-05 FEA-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 /079 W

----- 025487

R 250900Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7197

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

CNO WASHDC

S E C R E T SANA 0245

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR

SUBJECT: REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR COMIDEASTFOR

REF: STATE 017267

1. SUMMARY: THERE IS STRONG SUPPORT IN YARG OF PRESIDENT HAMDI
AND FONMIN ABDALLA AL-ASNAJ FOR US NAVAL PRESENCE IN
INDIAN OCEAN, RED SEA AREA, BUT YEMENIS AREN'T GOING TO
BE MUCH HELP IN DEVELOPING CONSENSUS FOR RETENTION OF
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COMIDEASTFOR.

2. YARG IS DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH GROWING ABILITY SOVIETS PROJECT POWER THROUGH THEIR OWN MILITARY MEANS AND THROUGH RADICAL REGIMES LIQKE SOMALIA, MPLA IN ANGOLA AND PDRY. FACT THAT SHOOTING CONFLICE CONTINUES IN DHOFAR AND ETHIOPIA, COULD REVIVE IN SOUTHERN PARTS YARG AND COULD START IN AFTERMATH TFAI INDEPENDENCE, SHARPENS YARG SENSE OF NEED FOR GREAT POWER BALANCE IN REGION. IN ADDITION YARG ALSO RECOGNIZES VITAL NATIONAL INTEREST IN SECURITY AND STABILITY OF GULF, SOURCE OF OIL WEALTH WHICH IS OF NO LESS IMPORTANCE TO AID-RECIPIENT YEMEN THAN TO PRODUCERS.

3. COMIDEASTFOR THEREFORE PROVIDES VALUABLE PRESENCE WHICH YARG WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN AREA FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

4. HOWEVER, IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT SMALL AND DEPENDENT YEMEN WOULD BE ABLE OR WANT TO TRY TO GET OUT IN FRONT OF SAUDIS AND OTHER GULF STATES, NOT TO MENTION POWERFUL IRAN. IF NO RPT NO WILLINGNESS EXISTS AMONG THESE COUNTRIES TO SUPPORT CONTINUATION OF COMIDEASTFOR ACTIVELY--RATHER THAN ASK "WHY NOT THE AMERICANS?"-- YARG WILL CERTAINLY NOT RPT NOT TAKE A POSITIVE PUBLIC ROLE.

5. PROBLEM IS COMPLICATED BY FACT THAT YARG HAS LITTLE

OR NO DEALINGS WITH BAHRAIN EXCEPT FOR OCCASIONAL POLITE VISITS. MOREOVER, YARG VIEWS REASONS FOR TERMINATION AS SPRINGING FROM DOMESTIC RATHER THAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS PROBLEMS OF BAHRAIN, AND WOULD THEREFORE BE RELUCTANT TO INTERFERE. NEVERTHELESS, YARG MIGHT BE WILLING PLAY A MORE POSITIVE PRIVATE ROLE IN MATTER OF RETENTION. WE COULD PERHAPS PERSUADE HAMDI TO RAISE ISSUE WITH SAUDIS, POSSIBLY WITH ABU DHABI, BAHRAIN. IN THIS EFFORT, AS WE HAVE NOTED IN EARLIER CABLES YARG MIGHT BE WILLING TAKE LINE THAT COMIDEASTFOR SHOULD NOT BE WOULD DOWN UNLESS SIMILAR PRESSURE IS SUCCESSFULLY

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EXERTED ON SOVIET ACCESS TO ADEN. THIS MIGHT DELAY TERMINATION OF COMIDEASTSOR IF NOT SHAPE CONSENSUS FOR RETENTION.

6. HOWEVER FACT THAT RUSSIAN MILITARY DELIVERIES TO YARG HAVE JUST BEEN REVIVED AND PROBABLY EXPANDED, WHILE US-SAUDI

ARMS EFFORTS ARE STILL IN DEFINITION RATHER THAN DELIVERY

STAGE, MAKES EVEN THIS LIMITED YARG EFFORT QUESTIONABLE.
RANSOM

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